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THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER.

N. O. WALLACE, J

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A Search for John Smith

John Smith married my father's great uncle's eldest daughter, Melinda Byrne. Consequently I was a relative to John. John's family had often visited our quiet country home, and at each visit had most cordially pressed us to return the compliment.

Last October, business called me suddenly to the city of B—, where our relatives resided, and without having time to write or apprise them of my coming, I was intending a visit to the family of Mr. John Smith.

With my accustomed carelessness, I had left his precise address at home in my note book, but I thought little of it; I could easily find him, I thought, as the cars set me down amid the smoke and bustle of—

I inquired for my relative, of the first hackman I came across. He looked at me with an ill-suppressed grim. What was the fellow laughing at? To be sure my clothes were not of the very latest cut, and it is not just the thing for any one out of the army to wear blue with bright buttons; but my coat was whole, and my aunt Betsey had scoured the buttons with whiting and soft soap until they shone like gold. I repeated my question with dignity.

"Can you direct me to the residence of Mr. John Smith?" "Mr. S-m-i-t-h?" he said slowly.

"Yes, sir, Mr. John Smith. He married my father's great uncle's eldest daughter, Melinda."

"I don't think I know a John Smith with a wife Melinda." John Smith seemed to be a common noun with him, from the peculiar tone he used in speaking of that individual. "Ah!" remarked I, "then there is more than one of that name in the city?"

"I rather think there is."

"Very well, then direct me to the nearest."

"The nearest is in West street second left hand corner—you'll see the name on the door."

I passed on congratulating myself on the cordial welcome I should receive from John and Melinda.

I soon reached the place—a handsome house with the name on the door-plate; I rang the bell—a servant appeared.

"Mr. Smith in?" "No, sir; Mr. Smith is in the army."

"Mrs. Smith—is she?" "In the army? Oh, no—she is at the beach."

"This is Mr. John Smith's house, is it?" "It is."

"Was his wife's name Melinda, and was she a Byrne before she was married, from Squashville?"

The man reddened and responded angrily, "I'll not stand here to be insulted! Make off with yourself, or I'll call the police, I thought from the first that you was an entry thief, but you don't play no game on me!" and he banged the door in my face.

I, a thief? If I had not been in such a hurry to find the Smiths, I should have given that rascally fellow a sound chastising on the spot.

Inquiry elicited the fact that a John Smith resided in Arch street. Thither I bent my steps. A maid servant answered my ring.

"Mr. Smith in?" "Before the lady could reply, a big red-faced man jumped out of the shadows behind the door, and laid his heavy hand on my shoulder.

"Yes, sir," he cried in a voice of thunder.

"Mr. Smith is in. He stayed at home all day on purpose to catch you! and how by Jupiter, I'll have my revenge!"

"Sir," said I, "there must be some mistake. Allow me to inquire if you are Mr. John Smith?"

"I'll inform you about Mr. John Smith in a way that you

won't relish, if you don't settle damages forthwith. Five thousand dollars is the very lowest figure—and you must leave the country!"

I cried, "What do you take me for? You'd better be careful or you'll get your head caved in!"

"I'll cave your head in for you, you young villain, you!" cried he, springing at me with his cane.

"Oh, John, dear John!" exclaimed a shrill female voice, and a tall figure in a sea of flourishes bounded down the stairway. "Don't do it, for the love of heaven—don't murder him!"

"Whom do you take me for?" cried I, my temper rising.

"I looks well for you to ask that question!" sneered the man, "you who have won my wife's heart, and are here now to plan to elope with her! I've found it all out—you needn't blush, and—"

"I beg pardon for interrupting you," said I, "but I have never seen your wife before. I perceive that she is not Melinda, the eldest daughter of my father's great uncle."

"Sir, do you deny that you are William Jones? Do you deny that you are in love with my wife?"

"I am not a Jones—I have not that honor, sir. My name is Parkwell—Henry Parkwell, of Squashville!" and, with a bow, I took myself off.

After that I called at the residence of three John Smiths—none of them was my Mr. Smith, and nothing occurred worthy of note.

My next Mr. Smith resided in Portland street. Thither I bent my steps. It was a very small house evidently not the house of wealth and cleanliness. I made my way up to the front door, through a wilderness of old rags, broken crockery, old tin ware, etc., scattering a flock of hens and rousing a snappish little terrier from his nap on the steps.

A red-faced woman answered my rap, but before I could make my customary inquiry she opened on me like a two-edged butcher-knife.

"Well, of all the impudent rascals that ever I see, you beat the lot! I want to know if you had the cheek to come back here again? You'd like to sell me another German-silver teapot, and another brass bosom pin to dear Araminta—wouldn't you?"

"By no means," said I; "I beg leave to inform you—"

"Oh, you needn't beg! We don't believe in beggars! I s'pose you thought I should not know you—but I did! I should know that black bag of yours in California! Clear out of my presence or I'll lay my broom-handle over you! If there is anything I hate, it's a peddler—especially a rascal like you!"

"Allow me to inquire," said I, "if Mr. John Smith's wife was Melinda Byrne, the eldest daughter of my father's—"

The broomstick was lifted. I heard it cut the air like a minnie bullet, and sprang down the steps into the street, at my best pace.

An angry man I do not fear, but who can stand before an angry woman? I would rather face a roaring lion.

I called on two more Mr. Smiths—still unsuccessful in my search. It was getting near dark, and I was anxious to reach my destination.

My next Mr. Smith was located in Lenox street. It was twilight when I rang the bell at his door.

A smiling fellow admitted me, fairly forcing me into the hall, before I could utter a word.

"Walk right in, sir, they are expecting you! The ladies will be down in a moment. Miss Hattie is in the back parlor—Walk right in, sir."

I was gently pushed toward the door of a shadowy apartment, and at the entrance I was announced—

"Mr. Henry!"

The gas was not lighted, and the apartment was in semi-darkness. I heard a soft, quick footfall on the carpet, and a pair of the sweetest lips in the world touched mine; and good gracious—for a moment the world swam; and I felt as if I had been stewed in honey, and distilled into Lubin's best triple extract of roses.

"Oh, Henry—my dearest and best! Why don't you kiss me, Henry?" cried a voice like music. "Have you ceased to care for me?" and again the kiss was repeated.

Who could resist the temptation? I am naturally a diffident man, but I have some human nature in me, and I paid her principal and interest.

"Oh, Henry, I had so feared that being in the army had made you cold hearted—good heavens!" She fell back against a chair as pale as death. The servant had lit the gas, and I stood revealed.

"I beg your pardon, marm," said I; "there is evidently some mistake. May I inquire if Mr. Smith's wife was Melinda Byrne, the eldest daughter of my father's great uncle?"

The red flush came to the young lady's cheek—she was as handsome as a picture—and she replied with courtesy:

"She was not. You will, I hope, excuse me for the blunder I have committed? We are expecting my brother Henry from the army, and your blue clothes deceived me."

"For which I shall always wear blue," I replied gallantly. "Allow me to introduce myself—I am Henry Parkwell, of Squashville;" and in making my best bow, I stumbled over an ottoman, and fell smash into a china closet, demolished at least a dozen plates and as many glass tumblers.

I sprang to my feet—seized my bag, and without a word dashed out of the house.

I knocked over a man who was passing at the moment, and landed myself on my head in the gutter. The man picked himself up, and was about to make a display of muscle, when the glare of the street lamp revealed to me the well-known face of my John Smith.

"Eureka!" cried I. "Allow me to inquire if your wife was Melinda, the eldest daughter of my father's great uncle Byrne?"

"She was!" said he, grasping my hand, "and I am delighted to see you! But, confound it! you needn't come at a fellow so!"

But I must cut my story short. He took me home with him and I had a good visit; I saw Melinda to my heart's content. Nay, more—I met and was properly introduced to Hattie Smith—aid—well—I am having a new suit of clothes made—and in due course they will be married—myself in them, to the young lady just alluded to.

DUELING.—The Memphis "chivalry" ought to read the following extract. It is from the Louisville Courier-Journal:

"In this age a bully's denunciation can fix no lasting stigma. The war proved personal courage to be a common heritage to our race, and that none stood the test so poorly as the duelist and the bully. No man now regards the acceptance of a challenge as a proof of courage. On the contrary, the tendency is to regard it as an act of cowardly deference to the standard of mock chivalry, set up by a class who are wanting genuine courage and real manliness."

A court in Michigan has decided that a physician is not a warrantor or insurer of a case, and he is not to be tried by the result of his remedies. His only contract and duty is to treat the case with reasonable skill and diligence.

The census in Indiana reveals the fact that in a majority of cases where twins are returned, the husband is younger than the wife.

The man who lost four wives and married a fifth, simply carried out a four-gone conclusion.

Temple of the Muses.

"GOING ALONE."

With curls in the sunny air tossing, With light in the merry blue eyes, With laughter so clearly outlining, A laugh of delight and surprise, All friendly assistance disdaining, And trusting no strength but his own, The past fears and trials forgotten, The baby is "going alone!"

What woful mishaps have preceded This day of rejoicing and pride! How often the help that he needed Has carelessly gone from his side! He has fallen while reaching for sunbeams, Which, just as he grasped them had flown, And the tears of vexation have followed, And now he is "going alone!"

And through all his life he will study This lesson again and again: He will carefully learn upon shadows, He will fall and weep over the pain; But just keep warm, sunny welcome To those who seem truest and best; Yet chastened and taught by past sorrow, And stronger and madder grown, Not trusting his all in their keeping, He learns to walk bravely alone.

And yet not alone, for our Father, The faltering footsteps will guide, Through the sombre mazes of earth-life, And "over the river" deep tide, Oh! here is a Helper unfailing, A strength we can perfectly trust, When all human strength is failing, "The dust shall return unto dust."

Trifling with Danger.

I was sitting at the table of an Irish merchant in Sligo a few years ago. He had his wines and his brandies on the table, and of course asked me to drink, and I had to assign my reasons for declining.

This gave me an opportunity to put in a little temperance; and while I was making my apology, I made the remark, "I would like to see the man who could truthfully say, no relative or friend of mine ever fell through intemperance."

I saw that this had struck him; his knife and fork fell from his grasp, and he remained silent for some seconds.

"Well," said he, "I am not that man. My first Sunday School superintendent was a man of genial spirit—a noble man. He went into the wine trade and died a drunkard before he was forty."

My first class leader, I believe, was a good, intelligent, useful man, but he, too, yielded to the habit of intemperance and died a drunkard. My own father suffered through intemperance."

"Yes," I exclaimed, "and you yourself are parading before your children the instruments of death which slew your Sunday School superintendent, your first class leader and your father. The very rope with which they were hung, you are adjusting to catch your children. I can't afford to put my head in such a halter as that."

—Rep. W. Taylor.

During the winter of '67, Harry McN., of Baltimore, while acting in the capacity of commercial tourist and drummer, visited Wilmington, N. C., and stopped at one of the "first-class" hotels.

At the breakfast table he gave an elaborate order to the waiter, and included in it "two soft-boiled eggs."

Sambo went off to the kitchen, but soon returned and asked: "Mass Boss, did you want dem eggs scrambled?" "No," said Harry, "I want them soft-boiled."

"All right, sar," and off he trotted again. In a few moments he loomed in again, and remarked in a most persuasive tone, "Mass Boss, you better have dem eggs scrambled."

"What the d—do you mean?" roared Harry. "Well," said Sambo, "Mass Boss, I'll tell you, dem eggs ain't very fresh, and dey'll look better scrambled."

Harry cancelled the order for hen fruit in toto.

Grant visited a watch factory at Marion, New Jersey, and what do you think he did? Why, of course the proprietors of the factory offered him a watch, and he was too modest to refuse an acceptance. Somebody in that factory will get office. You bet!

A natural cave has been discovered near the Truckee mine, Nevada, into which a man has been lowered two hundred feet without seeing any signs of bottom. It is lined with coral stalactites.

Jeroboam Hezekiah Snooks has been arrested in Detroit for trying to smuggle Bibles from Canada. A man with such a name couldn't have too much Bible, but then he should render unto Caesar.

Statistics are being carefully compiled of the pockets picked at the late Michigan fairs. Returns so far indicate nearly 500, with thirteen towns to hear from.

A Murder Proved by a Gun-wad.

The circumstances attending the trial and conviction of the murderer, Skraggs, are interesting. R. V. Richardson, the murdered man, had been a brigadier-general in the Confederate army, and an attorney at law in civil life. His abilities were above the average, and such was the blamelessness of his life and character, that it was not supposed that he had an enemy except a former business partner, who has left the country, and is suspected of having instigated the murder. On the 6th of January last as Richardson was sitting on the piazza of the hotel, he was shot by two men from behind a loaded wagon standing in the yard. The murderers were not recognized except by a negro; and although Skraggs and Frank Clark were arrested on his statement, their lives, in this State, would hardly have been greatly jeopardized by negro testimony of so vague a character had no evidence of a corroborative nature been added to convince the minds of the jury. The wadding of the gun which had killed Richardson was picked up and carefully preserved. It was a roughly torn piece of a German newspaper. Subsequently, when Skraggs's house was searched, a double-barrelled gun was found, only one barrel of which was loaded. The load being drawn, the wad was found to be a piece of a German newspaper, which fitted on one of its sides to the piece, which had been found in the hotel yard. This was conclusive, and Skraggs was adjudged worthy to suffer the severest penalty known to the law. Clark, his alleged companion in guilt, is to be tried during the present month, and the identification by the negro—already so remarkably corroborated in one case—will be quite likely to prove fatal, since the only other witness to the deed is dead.—Greenville Union.

Stopping the Train.

The express train was whirling along over the Lehigh Valley Railroad the other day—behind time, and running at furious speed—when the engineer caught sight of an old lady slowly pattering ahead upon the track. Instantly the whistle was blown. No heed, however, was taken of it. But thinking the venerable dame would get out of danger in due time, the speed was not slackened, though the screaming of the whistle made the mountain ring. The old lady, however, kept on slowly, neither turning her head to the right nor left, until the engine was almost upon her; then the brakes were put on with a will, and a stoppage effected just in time to save her life.

"What the deuce is the matter with you?" asked the engineer, as he jumped off and took the ancient dame by the shoulder.

"Guess you needn't scream so. You have made fuss enough already," was the caustic reply.

"You heard the whistle then?" "Sartinly; I hain't deaf."

"Then, why in the name of thunder didn't you get off the track?"

"You hain't got no right to run over folks, as I know on, and it's your business to stop when you see them walking on the track!"

The swearing of "our army in Flanders" was nothing compared to that of the engineer, as he pushed her aside, sprang upon the engine, and set it whizzing again to the tune of forty miles an hour.

THE CROWN PRINCE'S GENERALSHIP.—A London paper thinks the Crown Prince's mysterious delay before marching upon McMahon at Sedan may have been due to the fact that he, his Generals and soldiers, were in the heart of the champagne country. Doubtless one and all freely quaffed of the sparkling nectar at the expense of Rhoderer, Mareaux, Heidsieck, Piper, widow Cluquet, and other champagne kings and queens, but no delay occurred for that reason. On the contrary the movements of the Crown Prince's army at that time form a part of one of the most brilliant episodes of military history. Instead of pushing directly on McMahon at the Chalons Camp, the Crown Prince held back, thereby exposing him (McMahon) to the temptation of going to the relief of Bazaine. No sooner had he yielded to this temptation, than the Crown Prince gathered up his forces in an instant, and with lightning speed swept around the hostile army, driving it, across the Meuse, and ultimately, with assistance, into the Sedan trap. A more masterly and brilliant feat of generalship is not recorded in military annals.

An Expensive Lawsuit.

About two years ago two brothers named Kelsch, living near Napoleon, in this county, had a settlement, and a difficulty arose about a barrel of salt, the price of which was three dollars and fifty cents. They commenced lawing, and the suit was not finally terminated until the last term of the Circuit Court. Geo. Kelsch was obliged to pay his brother Blazer \$3.50 for the salt, and the costs of the suit, which amounted to three hundred and forty-nine dollars and seven cents. That added to \$3.50 makes \$352.57. Dear barrel of salt, that. Of course this does not include Attorney's fees, nor loss of time nor temper. 'Tis glorious to go to law.—Aurora (Indiana) Advocate.

The Philadelphia Age insists that General Phil Sheridan should be allowed to witness the operations of the French army, as, by so doing, he might learn humanity, courtesy, and conduct becoming an officer and a gentleman.

Indiana rivals Massachusetts in its best regulations. A man has been indicted for buying ale for his sick wife, and giving the surplus to his minor children.

Statistics are being carefully compiled of the pockets picked at the late Michigan fairs. Returns so far indicate nearly 500, with thirteen towns to hear from.

In a Fix.

How a Scallawag Candidate was Stumped in South Carolina.

A correspondent of the Charleston Courier relates a conversation as it occurred at a political mass meeting at Kingston, South Carolina, between R. B. Carpenter, the Reform candidate for Governor, and one Powell Smythe, Radical candidate for State Senator.

Judge Carpenter was alluding to the heavy increase of taxes, when Powell Smythe interrupted him, saying: "May I ask you a question, Judge?"

"The Judge—'Certainly, if you will allow me afterwards to ask you one.'"

Smythe—"What was the tax on slaves in 1866?"

The Judge—"There was not a slave in the United States in 1866."

Smythe—"I mean in 1865?"

The Judge—"There was none then."

Smythe—"Well, I mean in 1864?"

The Judge—"I don't know; at that time I was not here; I was on the other side fighting in the Union army. And now for my question?"

"Are you the man who had the wife and six children in Clarendon, and went to Columbia, joined the Scott Ring, got rich by bribery, and married another woman there?"

The crowd—"Yes, that's so; he's the man."

Smythe (sheepishly)—"I wasn't married to the first one."

The Judge—"The children were your own?"

Smythe—"Yes, but my wife was not my wife; I only lived with her on a temporary infatuation."

The Judge—"You were in the Legislature two years? Now I'll tell you a law that you don't seem to know anything about. That law makes man and woman, who have lived together as you have in this case, man and wife; and if you don't mind you will go to the Penitentiary as a bigamist, instead of going to the State Senate."

This was too much: the crowd, white and black, who knew of Smythe's villainy, yelled, and the poor devil slunk away in the crowd. He never asked another question, and I don't think ever will again.

Spicy Correspondence.

The following correspondence recently took place between Rev. J. D. Fulton of Boston, formerly pastor of the Baptist church of this city, and Rev. Theodore Tilton, editor of the New York Independent.

FULTON TO TILTON.
BOSTON, MASS.

THEODORE TILTON, Esq:

DEAR SIR: I have been informed that you were seen at a restaurant on Broadway a day or two since, with a bottle of wine before you, and of which you several times partook.

As you are the chief editor of a religious and temperance newspaper, and are therefore a public character, I assume the right to ask you whether this report is true. If true, I shall take such means as I may think expedient to put the truth before the public through the newspapers.

J. D. FULTON.

TILTON TO FULTON.

REV. D. SIR:—Your information is correct. I did drink wine at the time referred to, as it is my habit to do whenever I need it or wish it.

You are at liberty to make any use you please of this information and to publish whatever you please, concerning me. Permit me to add, however, that no statement of yours against me will be complete without adding my opinion that you are either a knave or a fool.

THEODORE TILTON.

In Indiana a husband, after a spree, was led home by one of his friends, who after pointing him safely on his door steps, rang the bell and retreated somewhat deviously to the opposite side of the street to see if it would be answered. Promptly the "porte" was "ouverted," and the fond spouse, who had waited up for her truant, beheld him in all his roidness.

"Why, Walter, is this you?" "Yes, my dear." "What in the world has kept you so?" "Been out on a little turn with boys, my d-d-ling."

"Why, Walter, you are intoxicated!" "Y-y-es, dear, I estimate that's so." "What on earth made you get so drunk?" And why, oh, why do you come home to me in this dreadful state?" "Because, my darling, all 'tother places 't shut up!"

Indiana rivals Massachusetts in its best regulations. A man has been indicted for buying ale for his sick wife, and giving the surplus to his minor children.